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ABSTRACT

A 3-year collaborative project among Clay and Duval County (Florida) school districts, two professional teacher organizations, Florida Community College at Jacksonville, and the University of North Florida College of Education and Human Services sought to improve the preparation of urban teachers, increase student achievement, and decrease urban teacher attrition rates. The project included a clinical continuum beginning with pre-education students at the community college and the university, continuing through their pre-internship and internship experiences and first year of teaching, as well as the development of in-service professionals. Targeted instructional strategies were chosen for proven effectiveness with urban students; professional norms were those that support reform of both preservice and inservice teachers (collegiality, experimentation, reflectivity, commitment to teaching, multicultural sensitivity, teacher empowerment, and ongoing inquiry). Teams were in place for each of four places on the continuum: an implementation team coordinated project parts, and an evaluation team worked at the end of the third year to assess and disseminate information and to make recommendations. The project has significantly restructured the clinical phase of teacher preparation, improved schools, and showed indications of lower teacher attrition rates. The paper includes appendixes containing the continuum and a fact sheet on the project. (Contains 14 references.) (JB)

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Partners Within Diverse Learning Communities

University of North Florida
College of Education and Human Services

Collaborating to Improve Teacher Education and School Reform in Urban Settings

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COLLABORATING TO IMPROVE

TEACHER EDUCATION AND SCHOOL REFORM

IN URBAN SETTINGS

The preparation of teachers equipped to deal effectively with the realities of urban classrooms of the 21st Century has been a focus of concern for both the educational and business communities during the late 1980's and into the 1990's (Carnegie Forum of Education and the Economy, 1986; Commission of the Education of Teachers into the 21st Century, 1991; Goodlad, 1990; Schlechty, 1990). Many calls for reforming teacher preparation, both preservice and inservice, emphasized the need for collaborative partnerships that better prepare teachers for urban schools and include such studies as Teachers for our Nation's Schools (Goodlad, 1990), "Working through School-University Collaboration: Promises, Problems, Possibilities" (Ashbaugh & Kasten, 1985), and "Learning to Talk about Teaching" (Lemlech & Kaplan, 1991). In response to these suggestions and criticisms, the Jacksonville, Florida AT&T Alliance for Tomorrow's Teachers project was developed and implemented.

Project Purpose

The AT&T Alliance for Tomorrow's Teachers project is a three-year (1991 - 1994) collaborative project among two school districts (Clay and Duval Counties), two professional teacher organizations (Clay County Education Association and Duval Teachers United), a community college (Florida Community College at Jacksonville), and a college of education (University of North Florida's College of Education and Human Services). The project was funded through a grant from the AT&T Foundation which supports collaborative efforts to improve the preparation of urban teachers, increase student achievement, and decrease the attrition rates of teachers in urban schools. The AT&T Foundation selected five sites nationally as pilot sites for these endeavors: Detroit, Houston, Jacksonville, New York City, and San Francisco. In November of 1993, the Jacksonville project was awarded the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) Christa McAuliffe Showcase of Excellence Award for excellence and innovation in teacher education.

The primary purpose of this project is to restructure the University of North Florida College of Education's teacher education program while simultaneously assisting three urban elementary schools to produce increased achievement in K-6 students and reduce the attrition rate of beginning teachers placed in urban

settings. The planning, design, and implementation processes were grounded using three conceptual tools as decision criteria: (1)transforming independent goals into mutually beneficial actions; (2)participating in cultures that are distinctly different; and (3)changing norms of interaction using mutually agreed upon paradigm shifts.

The ultimate goal is to institutionalize those components which prove most effective in preparing teachers for urban schools

Project Structure

To accomplish the above goals, a Clinical Continuum (See Appendix A) was developed and implemented that begins with pre-education students at the community college and the university, continues through the preinternship and internship experiences and the first-year of teaching to the development of inservice professionals. A common thread running through all four components is the focus on six instructional strategies and seven selected professional norms (See Appendix B).

The targeted instructional strategies were chosen for their proven effectiveness in increasing achievement in urban elementary students and include diagnosing the learning needs and modalities of individual students, integrating higher order thinking skills into the daily curriculum, using cooperative learning as a primary delivery mode, using strategies that enhance students' self-concepts, integrating subject area content across the curriculum, and integrating various technologies into the classroom. The selected professional norms are those which support reform of the preparation of both preservice and inservice teachers: collegiality, experimentation and risk-taking, reflectivity, commitment to teaching, multicultural sensitivity, teacher-as-decision-maker, and on-going inquiry. As the project was implemented, these became operationalized into desired outcomes for the preparation of urban teachers; teachers who

* are capable of creating and sustaining a learning environment for urban students which enables those students to succeed,
* continue to experiment and improve their practice throughout their professional careers,
* routinely use problem-solving, critical thinking, teamwork, and reflectivity in carrying out their professional responsibilities,
* routinely adapt learning experiences to meet special learning needs of their students paying particular attention to student's prior knowledge and learning styles,
* routinely integrate multicultural education into the learning environments they create,
* function as decision makers who make reasonable judgments, are able to articulate the rationale for those decisions, and

are able to modify their actions based on additional data.

During Year One (1991-92), cooperative planning/study Teams were established for each of the four stages on the Clinical Continuum. These teams, with membership from all of the collaborative partners, researched the necessary knowledge bases and then used the results of this research to design the project activities that were implemented during Year Two (1992-93), and then refined and revised during Year Three (1993-1994). The Teams include Early Field Experiences, Preinternship Experiences, three school-based Internship Experiences teams at three urban elementary schools, and First-Year Teaching Experiences.

An Implementation Team serves as the coordinating/collaboration link among project components and the Alliance partner institutions. Meeting on a regular basis, this team tackles implementation problems and helps to modify project plans and activities to accommodate the special needs/concerns of the project institutions.

As the project neared the end of its third year, an additional Evaluation Team was added to the project structure to develop and implement a research and evaluation plan, collect data, assess project outcomes, and disseminate pertinent findings to the partner institutions for consideration and possible institutionalization of effective components.

Unique Attributes

Teacher development in the Alliance for Tomorrow's Teachers project is conceptualized along a continuum beginning with early field experiences and extending to the experiences of professional inservice educators. The project identified five points on this continuum around which to organize specific project activities. These five continuum points include early field experiences, preinternship experiences, internship experiences, and experiences of professional educators. Unique attributes and activities for each continuum point are described below.

1. Early Field Experiences

The Alliance Project's Clinical Continuum begins the improvement of the preparation of urban teachers earlier than in traditional teacher preparation programs by providing freshmen and sophomores with field experiences in urban schools. In collaboration with Florida Community College at Jacksonville, which educates the majority of the University of North Florida's education majors during their first two years, modifications of the Introduction to Education course were piloted to provide freshmen and sophomores with opportunities to experience the culture of teaching and schools early in their program, to observe and document the sometimes conflicting roles teachers assume, and to begin the transition from the role of student to that of teacher.

These early field experiences focus on four themes:
(1) multiple and diverse field placements in a variety of settings and levels.
(2) observation and analysis of teaching and the schools using appropriate observational tools.
(3) the use of targeted instructional activities and materials to guide the examination of teaching from the perspective of personal beliefs, values, and attitudes.
(4) the initiation of a professional portfolio.

This portfolio, initiated in the Introduction to Education course and continued through the preinternship and internship into the first year Florida Professional Orientation Program, provides a structure for individual reflection on thoughts, reactions, and feelings about the clinical experiences, brought together and organized around the course topics:

* me and teaching,
* history and philosophy of education,
* education, schooling, and classrooms,
* students and societal issues,
* curriculum and instruction,
* ethics, law, governance, control, and finance,
* effective teaching and schools.

Introduction to Education students attend biweekly seminars on either the community college or university campus engaging in discussions which encourage them to confront their own beliefs relative to issues such as social and cultural diversity and to become proficient in the decision-making process through such activities as keeping a journal and developing the above-mentioned portfolio. They also gain experience in interacting in a collegial group of peers concerning professional matters.

Alternate weeks are spent in urban public elementary, middle, and high school classrooms with diverse pupil populations providing multiple opportunities to interact with and observe students at varying developmental levels. Here pre-education students engage in focused observations that are then used as a springboard for seminar discussions.

2. Preinternship Experiences

Through the Alliance for Tomorrow's Teachers Project, the University of North Florida's preinternship component was transformed from a system that randomly placed juniors and seniors in schools to teach lessons required by the instructors of their campus courses to a more focused, meaningful experiences embedded in two two-credit seminars, Excelling in Clinical Education Learning I and II. Instead of completing two hours of field experience for each education course in which they were enrolled, all preintern students now enroll in EXCEL I and then in EXCEL II. The EXCEL program (Fountain, Keenan, Ashbaugh, et.al., 1991) has

two broad goals:

(1) The first is to provide an inquiry-oriented problem-solving set of experiences which provide structured field experiences prior to student teaching. Within this context, preinterns have opportunities to observe and analyze "slices" of practice, relate those observations to theory, and then practice and develop specific skills using a teacher-as-researcher perspective.

To achieve this goal, preinterns spend five hours a week in the field in a setting selected to provide experiences with urban students. Project participants are placed in the classrooms of a cadre of approximately fifty outstanding classroom teachers from the two partner school districts. Using research on the roles and critical attributes of effective mentors (Keenan, Marquardt, Newhall, 1993), as well as the six targeted instructional strategies discussed earlier, this cadre of mentors was recruited, selected, and trained during the 1992 spring and summer terms. Mentor Teachers have courtesy appointments at the university while serving as school-based on-site directing teachers for the preinterns. In addition, the Mentor Teacher Cadre forms the students for a nontraditional course that will be discussed later in this paper.

(2)The second goal of EXCEL is to provide a strong link between theory and practice. To aid in achieving this, preinterns participate in weekly seminars that are taught by four exemplary public school classroom teachers (EXCEL Clinical Educators) who are on alternate assignment from the Clay and Duval County school districts to spend half their time at the university. EXCEL seminars focus on the following instructional goals for preinterns:

* develop an understanding that learning is ongoing and continuous,
* develop strategies to analyze and solve teaching dilemmas thereby enhancing their own self-confidence through a better understanding of the realities of the urban classroom,
* develop an awareness of the individual needs of all students, especially those who do not thrive in existing programs,
* develop an understanding of what it means to be a professional teacher,
* develop an understanding of the major roles related to teaching and a commitment to these roles and to the profession,
* develop an understanding that existing knowledge does not fit every situation and that every problem does not have a single "correct" answer,
* develop important teaching skills through opportunities to practice and receive feedback,
* develop respect for and understanding of cultural diversity.

Preservice teachers thus have opportunities to work with exemplary

classroom teachers and thus have access to the accumulated skills and wisdom of successful teachers.

3. Internship Experiences

The internship component of the teacher preparation at the University of North Florida has also changed in the Alliance for Tomorrow's Teachers project. From a system of random, one-to-one directing teacher/intern placements, three urban elementary schools were selected as AT&T Alliance demonstrations schools for a three-year period. Using a knowledge base of research on stages and cycles of teacher growth (Mayher & Brause, 1991), on the needs of novice teachers (Loucks-Horsley, 1989), as well on the six targeted instructional strategies and the seven professional norms, during Year One the Planning/Study Team at each of the three demonstration schools developed and implemented experiences for the interns that would produce beginning teachers who

* are capable of creating and sustaining a learning environment for at-risk students which enables those students to succeed,
* continue to experiment and improve their practice throughout their professional careers,
* routinely use problem-solving, critical thinking, teamwork, and reflectivity in carrying out their professional responsibilities,
* routinely adapt learning experiences to meet special learning needs of their students paying particular attention to students' prior knowledge and learning styles,
* routinely integrate multicultural education into the learning environments they create,
* function as teachers-as-decision-makers who make reasonable judgments, are able to articulate the rational for those decisions, and are able to modify their actions based on additional data.

These three schools are piloting a design that modifies the traditional internship experiences in the following ways:

* A large block of interns (18-22) is placed at each of the three schools,
* The interns are supervised by two exemplary classroom teachers (Resident Clinical Faculty) who are released from their teaching duties to spend half their time guiding and assisting interns and directing teachers and the other half working to implement their school's individual School Improvement Plan,
* Interns and directing teachers are divided into teams comprised of regular and special education teachers, fellow interns, and one of the Resident Clinical Faculty,
* Interns have teaching experiences at several grade levels and with special education and regular education students,
* A University of North Florida College of Education faculty

member is assigned to each demonstration school to chair the Planning/Study Team, assist the Resident Clinical Faculty in their work with interns and directing teachers, and teach the nontraditional course taken by inservice teachers that will be discussed later in this paper.

The AT&T Alliance internship model provides a readily accessible support system for the interns as the Resident Clinical Faculty are school-based and are thus able to quickly intercede before problems become insurmountable. They observe the interns weekly in a variety of settings. They conduct periodic seminars and weekly meeting with the interns and directing teachers. In addition, interns learn to establish professional networks in their teams and use these support networks in solving teaching dilemmas.

4. Beginning Teacher Experiences

Using a knowledge base of research on the needs of beginning teachers, the roles and critical attributes of effective mentors, the six targeted instructional strategies, and the professional norms, during Year One the Beginning Teacher Planning/Study Team developed a set of experiences for beginning teachers in urban schools that would help reduce the attrition rate of the typical first-year teachers in urban schools. In addition, the knowledge base of the Florida Professional Orientation Program was incorporated into the design and implementation of these activities.

During Year Two of the project, sixteen University of North Florida graduates who were beginning teachers in Clay and Duval County schools and the peer teachers assigned to them were invited to participate in a year-long experimental practicum. Th
is practicum, taught by a team of university and school district faculty, was designed to assist beginning teachers during their first year in the profession. Its activities included analyzing and solving critical teaching problems, learning about innovative strategies, and addressing identified needs. The practicum modeled and used cooperative learning, problem-solving, and teacher-as-researcher strategies. Part of the time was spent in role-alike seminars addressing need unique to each role group: beginning teacher, peer teachers, and principal.

In evaluating the practicum at the end of Year Two, the elements which were reported to be most useful were the structured time for meeting with other beginning teachers, the sharing of resources, and the opportunity to discuss problems with peer teachers on an individual basis. What proved to be least useful was the combining of beginning teacher and peer teacher teams from a variety of diverse urban schools. Due to the differences among the schools, and the kinds of problems unique to each school, it was difficult to generalize and provide assistance in a timely

manner.

As a result of this feedback, this model was not replicated during Year Three. Instead, Resident Clinical Faculty at each of the three Alliance demonstration schools have assumed the role of mentor to beginning teachers at their schools as well as to former interns who are now in their first year of teaching in other urban schools.

5. Professional Educator Experiences

The Professional Development Clinical Continuum focuses on the development of preservice teachers. Why, then, is professional educator experiences included? If schools are to be restructured with new purposes using new strategies and approaches based on substantive paradigm shifts (Louis & Simsek, 1991), then not only must the preparation of new professionals be significantly altered, so must existing practice. One cannot succeed in being successful without the other. Hence, the ongoing professional development of educators becomes a central and critical component of systemic reform. This is coupled with transforming the culture of schools and other educational institutions from isolated institutions to leaning communities by spanning institutional boundaries.

Outcomes of restructured professional development must assist educators to develop the skills needed to work productively and creatively in teams; foster an intellectual climate in that educators view themselves as capable of generating new knowledge and of applying knowledge systematically in solving problems; create stronger links between the professional development of teachers and the needs of K-12 students; and nurture the norms of collegiality, experimentation and continuous learning. These are very different outcomes than those of traditional professional development programs.

Four professional development strategies using these conceptions of professional development are included in the AT&T Alliance project: (1) the planning/study team structure, (2) the Mentor Teacher Cadre, (3) redesigned school-based and university faculty roles, and (4) school-improvement initiatives at the Alliance demonstration schools.

1. Planning/Study Teams as a Model for Professional Development

An extensive collaborative planning and implementation model was developed and implemented in a conscious effort to span institutional boundaries, to move from hierarchical organizational interactions to team-based organizational interactions, to assure that critical information and knowledge transcends traditional echelon levels, to achieve interrelated goals, and to foster the development of an inter-institutional learning community with its own set of norms and values. This model involved establishing a

number of Planning/Study Teams which evolved into Action/Study Teams during the implementation phase of the project. These planning/study teams differ from traditional small groups such as committees in the following ways:

*parity among all members of the team as an explicit value and expectation,
* continuity of membership from year to year,
* intensity of activities and sphere of responsibility assigned to the teams,
changing leadership roles within the teams,
* conscious efforts to value differing perspectives,
* responsibility for specific products which represent shared contributions of all team members.

These inter-institutional planning/study teams function using three agreed upon principles:

(1) Unity of Purpose: Teams were charged with developing and articulating a common vision for their component on the Clinical Continuum. Operationalized features of this vision can be seen in the daily activities associated with the component and are used as evaluation benchmarks to ascertain whether or not a given activity significantly contributes to the achievement of the vision.

(2) Decision-Making: Members of each planning/study team assume responsibility for making important decisions about how to fulfill the agreed-upon vision. These decisions are grounded in inquiry, the use of research, and "best practice." Teams assume responsibility for evaluating and determining if the correct decision has been made, looking to see where problems arise, and then taking corrective action. Each planning/study team is given authority and responsibility for its own operating budget.

(3) Commitment to Change and Risk-Taking: The inter-institutional nature of the planning/study teams and the kinds of responsibilities assigned to them are designed to provide psychological support and technical assistance to team members and involve team members with learning and applying new skills. Thus, planning/study teams become change facilitator encouraging their organizations to change. Change takes place over time and involves anxiety and uncertainty; thus, planning/study team members had to be willing to risk changing their actions and become agents of change within their own organizations.

2. Mentor Teacher Cadre as a Model for Professional Development

The Mentor Teacher Cadre is embedded in the second point on the Clinical Continuum: Preinternship Experiences. The organizational design for the cadre assigned three UNF EXCEL preinterns each term to one of the Mentor Teachers for field experiences. Each Mentor Teacher enrolls in a two-credit

nontraditional seminar at no cost that provided them with professional development opportunities to further develop their mentoring skills as well as advancing their expertise in the targeted instructional strategies. The content of this professional seminar was planned by committees of Mentor Teachers and the Preinternship Planning/Study Team.

The segment of the seminar focusing on advanced training in effective mentoring has included such activities as the development of conferencing skills, role playing and problem solving of challenging mentoring situations, and personality type inventories. It is the intent of the AT&T Alliance project that these Mentor Teachers will eventually be involved in mentoring not only preservice university students but their peers and colleagues in their own schools.

The second purpose of the members of the Mentor Teacher Cadre is to coach and share their acquired expertise in the targeted instructional strategies with colleagues by conducting school-based activities such as teaching demonstrations, inservice seminars, and visiting colleagues' classrooms. The original plan proposed that this component of the seminar would begin during the first year of the course, increase during the second year, and culminate in the third year of their appointment as Mentor Teachers. These experiences would enable them to assume the role of change agent in their schools and districts. To that end, several seminar meetings during the first year, including an all-day interactive professional conference, focused on first identifying and then honing teachers' expertise in using the targeted instructional strategies. A survey at the end of the first year found that Mentor Teachers felt focusing on all six strategies at once did not develop their expertise deeply enough in any one area so that they felt able to share with their colleagues. Thus, during the second year, the seminar was more focused and provided fewer options. The Mentor Teacher Cadre decided to focus on only one of the targeted strategies: integrating critical and creative thinking and problem solving into the classroom. This emphasis closely linked with the state of Florida's Blueprint 2000 initiative for school improvement and accountability.

3. Redesigned School-based and University Faculty Roles as a Model for Professional Development

As project activities unfolded, four issues related to the roles of educators became apparent: (1)the need for "cross-skilling" i.e. learning critical attributes of related roles and responsibilities, (2)the need for capacity-building of partner institutions, (3)the need to refine and expand the collaborative problem-solving skills of teachers and university faculty, (4) and the need to take into consideration various dimensions of teacher development. The response to this challenge was addressed with the creation of several jointly funded positions using internally reallocated university and school district dollars. These

positions (EXCEL Clinical Educators, Resident Clinical Faculty, and Lead Faculty) have all been identified previously in this paper, but here they will be considered as having potential for professional development for experienced educators.

EXCEL Clinical Educators. EXCEL Clinical Educators, as described earlier, are exemplary classroom teachers who have alternate assignments with the university and the school districts for two years. A portion of their time is spent on the university campus conducting the preinternship field-based seminars for students in the teacher preparation program. The other part of their time is spent in collaborative teams addressing district concerns; these have included assisting beginning and unsatisfactory teachers. As they interact with university faculty during their time on campus, Clinical Educators develop their own knowledge base on effective teaching and learning. They become a part of a community of researchers as they develop their own skills in preparing teachers for the schools of the future. In addition, they receive direct training in research methodologies and clinical supervision skills that makes them a valuable asset to their counties both in the portion of time they are based there and in their post-EXCEL professional career. Ten EXCEL Clinical Educators have now had the professional development that is embedded in this part of the model.

Resident Clinical Faculty. The Resident Clinical Faculty at the Alliance demonstration schools, as described earlier, are exemplary classroom teachers with alternative assignments for two years. Half of their time is spent in supervising the group of interns assigned to each Alliance school where they assume primary responsibility for cooperatively planning and supervising the internship experience. The remainder of their time, the Resident Clinical Faculty assume responsibility to initiate, facilitate, encourage, and implement agreed upon instructional changes embedded in their schools's School Improvement Plan. The primary goal of this component is to improve the day-to-day student achievement by enhancing the teaching and learning taking place in each classroom.

The six Resident Clinical Faculty come to campus every other week and engage in two professional inquiry-based seminars taught by university faculty. The first seminar focuses attention on the school improvement initiatives for which each RCF team is responsible. To carry out this school improvement facilitator role, the RCF's assume three related roles: emerging expert in content, emerging expert in process, and emerging expert in organizational design. This necessitates learning to do something as well as learning about something. The second seminar focuses attention on the clinical supervision process and the role of nurturing novice teachers to assume full membership in the profession.

Thus, the expertise gained as a result of the training to fulfill the role of Resident Clinical Faculty becomes incorporated in the

professional growth and development of these classroom teachers. This expertise is shared with colleagues both at the school sites and among the Resident Clinical Faculty themselves.

Lead Faculty. Lead Faculty are University of North Florida Faculty who spend at least two days each week at one of the AT&T Alliance demonstration schools implementing a collaboratively planned nontraditional course focusing on school improvement plans and targeting strategies for enhancing student achievement. Lead Faculty are charged with facilitating and coordinating the implementation of faculty-wide agreed upon instructional changes; they take on the role of change facilitator as they work collaboratively with Alliance classroom teachers to change what happens in classrooms. University faculty must learn to function as mentors, coaches, and instigators of change as opposed to their more traditional role of disseminators of information. Often times, Lead Faculty are called upon to become "emerging experts" themselves in areas with which they may be unfamiliar and then immediately translate that knowledge base into practice in the real word of schools and classrooms. Thus, the AT&T Alliance model becomes a vehicle for the professional development of university staff as well as district-level teachers.

4. School Improvement Initiatives as a Model for Professional Development

Three urban elementary schools were identified as AT&T Alliance demonstration schools during Year One of the project; one of the major goals of the project was to improve student achievement at these schools. To achieve this goal, demonstration schools were conceptualized as communities of learners where ongoing inquiry, learning, and assessment routinely occurs, where intellectual activity is valued and rewarded, where "best practices" are modeled and refined, and where educators are encouraged and supported in their efforts to transform teaching and learning processes. With this vision comes a different culture which may be characterized by the seven norms of interaction and the six targeted instructional strategies, both described earlier.

The connection between the Alliance project and school improvement in the Alliance schools began as a general goal during Years One and Two and increased in specificity during Year Three. By focusing on the six targeted instructional strategies, the Mentor Teacher seminar and the nontraditional courses in the Alliance schools had as their purposes increasing student achievement in urban schools. During the winter of 1992, the state of Florida implemented Blueprint 2000 (1992), its reform initiative. Each Florida school was required to submit a School Improvement Plan for achieving the goals and plans mandated in Blueprint 2000. Because all of the six targeted instructional

strategies are embedded in the "best practices" of Blueprint 2000, the goals of the nontraditional courses became more directly focused on School Improvement Plans during Year Three.

As described earlier, during the spring 1993 seminars for the Resident Clinical Faculty, each of them took on the role of "emerging expert" in one of the key components of their school's School Improvement Plan. For example, one of them actually became the chair of the school improvement committee at her school. At a second Alliance school, the Resident Clinical Faculty built their expertise in the areas of alternative assessment and cultural sensitivity, two standards mandated by Blueprint 2000 and given heavy emphasis by the School Improvement Plans. The Resident Clinical Faculty at the third school have taken incorporation of critical thinking into the curriculum as their area of expertise. As mentioned previously, as well as becoming experts in content, the Resident Clinical Faculty also developed expertise in change theory and effective professional development.

Each teacher at the AT&T Alliance demonstration schools is enrolled in a credit bearing, graduate level nontraditional course each semester that meets weekly at the school during regular school hours. Using this reconceptualized university course as the change vehicle, the Lead Faculty facilitates the implementation of school improvement plans described above. Lead Faculty assist classroom teachers in reflecting on their practice, acquiring and using new instructional strategies, experimenting to improve their practice, and encouraging them to examine their implicit beliefs about their students, teaching, and learning. The course encourages teachers to consider modifying their current teaching and learning processes in ways which enhance student achievement and implementation of the school improvement plans by creating and sustaining collegial professional networks within the school. The course is designed to encourage all teachers to actively participate in the school improvement process in a way that enhances their individual classroom while encouraging experimentation and risk-taking. During the summer 1993 training for the Resident Clinical Faculty and Lead Faculty, the nontraditional course was revised to more explicitly focus on the goal of implementing a part of the school improvement plans of the Alliance schools.

Questions teachers have about their practice or problems which concern them are the starting points for course activities. Teachers are organized into small (usually grade level) working teams. Class sessions may be organized as planning sessions, content sharing sessions, issue sessions, reflecting sessions, or as focus or refocusing sessions. Lead Faculty attempt to influence teachers' beliefs by reflecting on their current practice, by examining research and professional literature, and by sharing problems and reflections with colleagues.

Acquisition of new teaching behaviors is facilitated by giving attention to personal stages of concern (Hall, 1979), by providing

ongoing and long-term follow-up and support from Resident Clinical Faculty and Lead Faculty, by changes in the nature and organization of the internship experience, and by sharing successes and failures with colleagues in tandem with analytical discussions about the causes and effects of those successes and failures. To encourage the use of the targeted instructional strategies, these same strategies are emphasized in the requirements and organization of the internship experiences taking place concurrently at the school.

Finally the nontraditional course provides multiple opportunities to support the development and institutionalization of selected professional norms including collegiality, experimentation and risk-taking, teacher-as-decision-maker, and ongoing inquiry. Although the specific content of each school's course varies in accordance with the emphasis of the schools Improvement Plan, the general purpose of the nontraditional course is to assist teachers in answering the question, "What can I do differently to increase the rate and frequency of student success in my class?" To that end, each course has an action research component where participants target specific students who are failing or experiencing difficulty, use the knowledge gained in the course content to develop strategies to increase the achievement of these students, implement these strategies in their classrooms, observe and collect data, report at the weekly seminars, and revise and try again. Thus the nontraditional course becomes the support system to help the participants implement their school improvement plan.

Summary and Outcomes

The Jacksonville AT&T Alliance for Tomorrow's Teachers Project was an attempt to restructure and "reculture" both teacher preparation programs and public schools by collaboratively creating communities of learners for the purpose of dramatically improving the education of urban children. What have been the outcomes of the three years of planning and implementing project activities? To answer these broad questions, it is useful to return to the four major project goals and ask to what extent they were accomplished. The four major goals of the Jacksonville AT&T Alliance project were (1) to restructure the University of North Florida College of Educations's teacher preparation program so that preservice teachers demonstrate the skills, attitudes, and knowledge bases needed to effect long term improvement in student achievement in urban settings; (2)to restructure three Alliance urban elementary schools to increase student achievement by creating new organizational structures and modeling new ways of teaching and learning; (3)to reduce the attrition rate in the first five years of practice of new teachers; and (4)to institutionalize those components which prove to be effective. Although final evaluation data is still being collected and analyzed, several indicators of success can be identified.

The University of North Florida's teacher preparation program has been significantly restructured, specifically the clinical component.

(1) The redesigned Introduction to Education component at the community college and the university has mechanisms in place for involving preservice teachers in field experiences on three levels, for early advisement on what general education requirement will fulfill College of Education entry prerequisites, and for identifying and sharing the differences between the Intro course and the also required Foundations in Education course for juniors. In addition, the professional portfolio is now begun during early field, is built on during EXCEL and internship, and is carried into the Professional Orientation Program for beginning teachers.

(2) The EXCEL program has been institutionalized into the university teacher preparation program. The four preinternship Clinical Educators will continue to be jointly funded by the university and school districts thus institutionalizing the notion that exemplary classroom teachers can play effective roles in teaching university teacher preparation courses.

(3) The Mentor Teacher Cadre has been recognized by preinterns and Clinical Educators as an improvement on the way the preinterns' field experiences are supervised. Almost all Mentor Teachers have indicated a willingness to continue supervising preinterns after the grant period is over.

(4) Placement patterns of internship have changed to urban-focused and cluster placements partly because of data collected on comparisons of AT&T interns and non-AT&T interns which indicated higher levels of confidence on specific teaching competencies.

(5) The supervision of interns by school-based Resident Clinical Faculty will continue with joint funding by the university and school districts. In comparing AT&T interns and non-AT&T interns on the quality of supervision they received during internship, the immediate availability of the Resident Clinical Faculty was considered a "plus" by the interns.

(6) The three Lead Faculty report increased awareness of the elements of effective staff development as they sought to become change agents in schools. This assumption of new roles was not without difficulty and effort; as university faculty got involved in the actual daily life of schools and classroom teachers, they appreciated the difficulties of the school improvement process.

(7) The planning/study team has replaced committees as a way of "doing business" in the college of education. This process has become the expected interactive modality for other collaborative projects.

Changes are also apparent at the three AT&T Alliance schools where one of the goals was to restructure them to explore ways of improving achievement in K-6 children.

(1) Teachers, staff, and Lead Faculty report that the climate has changed to a more positive one at all three schools.

(2) Teachers and students are more involved in school-wide activities and initiatives, and teachers report more routine use of the six targeted instructional strategies since the initiation of the project.

(3) Teachers report new willingness to experiment to improve practice. New school-wide initiatives are evidenced at two of the Alliance schools: one focuses on school-wide use of critical thinking skills and the other focuses on implementing a new curriculum strategy designed to enhance the success of all students.

(4)The nontraditional course is used as a vehicle for change and serves as a "sounding board" and a forum for resolving school-wide issues. Many changes in format, design, and delivery have transpired as practitioners and university faculty struggled to redefine ongoing inquiry and its place in schools. Project initiatives are directly tied to Florida Blueprint 2000 and other state school improvement initiatives thereby increasing teachers' perceptions that their efforts are being more focused. Participants in the nontraditional course in Year Three report seeing a direct link between the course content and the implementation of their school improvement plan.

(5) Data has been collected on possible achievement gains in the three Alliance schools and is still being analyzed.

(6) Data collected on individual students' achievement as well as on other factors influencing school achievement (absentees, tardies, discipline referrals) is being analyzed to see if the strategies taught in the nontraditional courses and implemented by teachers in their classrooms does indeed affect student achievement.

(7) Other urban schools have observed the changes taking place at the AT&T Alliance schools and have actively campaigned to become future Alliance demonstration schools. The current Alliance schools have also indicated a strong desire to

continue the collaborative relationship.

(8) An initial stumbling block to the effectiveness of the Mentor Teacher Cadre has been the Mentor Teachers' resistance to the belief that they could become change agents in their schools and districts. Because they are often both formal and informal leaders in their schools, the potential for acting as influences for increasing student achievement in their schools would seem to be great. In fact, the original plan for the Mentor Teacher Cadre included a focus on change theory and elements of effective professional development during the third year of the course, next fall. At the present time,however, members of the Mentor Teacher Cadre demonstrate a greater commitment to mentoring preservice university students than they do to mentoring other colleagues. One of the partner school districts believes strongly in the notion of exemplary teachers mentoring their colleagues. Toward this end, this district has collaboratively developed and is now implementing a pilot program to recruit, select, and train exemplary classroom teachers for a newly-created school based-position of Professional Development Facilitator. The district Director of Professional Development met with the Mentor Teachers in the fall of 1993 to explain this new program and to encourage Mentor Teachers to apply for this position in their schools. Thus, the concept of an exemplary teacher at each school who has additional responsibility for professional development toward school-identified improvement goals has been partially institutionalized even before the completion of the AT&T Alliance project.

Reducing the attrition rate in the first five years of practice is difficult to assess as program graduates are either just ending or just beginning their first year of teaching. Indicators which point to decreased attrition rates include

(1) The increased confidence levels indicated by AT&T interns and summarized earlier in this paper.

(2) The reduced "turn-over" rate of experienced teachers at the Alliance schools. When surveyed at the end of Year Two, for example, one teacher reported that she would have asked for a transfer had it not been for the AT&T activities.

(3) The strong demand for AT&T participant graduates. Program graduates are actively recruited by their AT&T Alliance principals and sought out by other urban principals as their first choice candidates.

(4) Follow up studies of program graduates are planned as they become employed in schools both in Duval and Clay Counties and

throughout the state of Florida; preliminary interviews with graduates from Year Two graduates have already been conducted. In late July, principals who supervised the first teaching year of these graduates will be surveyed for their perceptions of the preparedness of these graduates, and these findings will be compared to already in place surveys of non-AT&T graduates' principals.

To reduce the attrition rate of teachers placed in urban settings, two changes must occur. First, teachers must be better prepared for the challenges faced in urban classrooms. Secondly, urban schools must be transformed into learning communities where ongoing inquiry, learning, and assessment routinely occurs, where intellectual activity is valued and rewarded, where "best practices" are modeled and refined, and where educators are encouraged and supported in their efforts to transform teaching and learning processes. Both are long term propositions.

As described more fully above, some components that have proven to be successful have already been institutionalized, both in the college and university communities and in the school district partners. But perhaps of more long range importance has been the institutionalization among the partners of the AT&T Alliance project the notion that collaborative partnerships are a viable structure for achieving systemic change in urban schools. The formal and informal networks created by the planning and implementation of the AT&T Alliance project goals have been utilized over and over again to solve current problems as well as to create new visions and ideas for other projects. An Urban Academy for Excellence in Teaching is a collaborative venture, funded by the Florida Department of Education, to improve the teaching and learning in the classrooms of six urban elementary schools. The Urban Systemic Initiative, a collaborative program funded by the National Science Foundation, seeks to improve inner city science and math teaching and learning in thirteen elementary, two middle, and one high school. And most recently, partners collaborated in writing a proposal for expanding the AT&T model to other urban elementary and middle schools. Through this ongoing collaborative process, the needs of teacher preparation programs and the needs of urban schools are met by spanning the boundaries between the two systems and providing benefits to both while accomplishing goals neither system could achieve independently.

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APPENDIX A

AT&T Alliance for Tomorrow's Teachers
A Partnership Among
College of Education and Human Services, University of North Florida
Clay County Public Schools Clay County Education Association
Duval County Public Schools Duval Teachers United
Florida Community College at Jacksonville
AT&T Foundation

THE CLINICAL CONTINUUM

EARLY FIELD EXPERIENCES
Freshman/Sophomore
Field Seminars
Field Experiences

Field-based Introductory Seminars taught by community college and college of education faculty.

Early field experiences are designed to introduce students to the culture of schools.

Provide opportunities to examine personal beliefs about the teaching/learning process.

Provide opportunities to observe and analyze school cultures and develop the tools needed to decode complexities of the classroom.

Monitored early field placements, ensure exposure to a diversity of school settings and students.

PREINTERNSHIP FIELD EXPERIENCES
Junior/Senior
EXCEL I and II
Mentor Teacher Cadre

Provide opportunities to analyze and solve teaching dilemmas; practice critical teaching skills.

Provide opportunities to develop respect and understanding for cultural diversity.

Provide opportunities to develop understanding of individual needs of all students, especially those who do not thrive in existing programs.

Four exemplary teachers on special two year assignments conduct field seminars, EXCEL I & II.

Monitored field placements ensure exposure to a diversity of school settings, students and teaching strategies.

Cadre of Mentor Teachers who demonstrate excellence in selected teaching strategies serve as on-site mentors for clustered EXCEL students and for inservice colleagues.

INTERNSHIP FIELD EXPERIENCES
Senior
Internship: 1 semester
Intern Clusters at ALLIANCE Schools

18 preservice interns clustered at each Alliance school.

3 urban elementary schools serve as models for restructuring and provide a transition for interns into the profession.

On-site Resident Clinical Faculty provide readily accessible support system for interns.

ALLIANCE Interns:
-clustered into teams
-focus attention on six targeted instructional strategies
-use professional norms of interaction
-assessed by performance-based outcomes using professional portfolios

Alliance Faculty include:
-2 on-site Resident Clinical Faculty at each school,
-40-60 ALLIANCE classroom teachers,
-COEHS Lead Faculty.

BEGINNING TEACHER
1st Year of Teaching
Professional Orientation Program
Mentoring

Beginning teacher/peer teacher teams established.

Resident Clinical Faculty serve as mentors to beginning teachers.

Participation in two specially designed on-site activities.

Emphasis on analyzing teaching problems and cooperatively developing solutions.

Policy implications for school districts and urban teacher preparation programs identified.

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR EXPERIENCES
Ongoing
Reconceptualized Professional Development Strategies

Mentor Teacher Cadre provides opportunities to: extend expertise using six targeted instructional strategies; work collaboratively with other experienced professionals helping preservice students acquire teaching competence.

Redesigned School-Based and University Faculty Roles provide opportunities to enhance existing expertise and acquire new areas of expertise.

Non-Traditional Coursework provides opportunities to collaboratively implement school improvement goals, establish and nurture collegial networks and experiment to improve practice.

Planning Study Teams function as organizational change agents and "negotiating forums" for points of tension as collaborative activities are implemented; and provide opportunities to create new solutions to address pressing problems.

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APPENDIX B

AT&T Alliance for Tomorrow's Teachers

University of North Florida College of Education and Human Services
Clay and Duval County Public School Districts
Duval Teachers United and Clay County Education Association
Florida Community College at Jacksonville
Jacksonville, Florida

Targeted Instructional Strategies

Diagnosing the learning needs and learning styles of students and adapting instructional delivery to meet those needs

Integrating higher order thinking skills into the daily curriculum

Using cooperative and team learning as primary instructional delivery strategies

Routinely using various technologies in daily instructional activities

Using instructional strategies which result in changed student perceptions of their abilities and their potential for achievement

Integrating subject area content into realistic contexts for at-risk students

Selected Professional Norms

- Collegiality
- Experimentation and Risk-Taking
- Reflectivity
- Commitment to Teaching
- Multicultural Sensitivity
- Teacher-as-Decision-Maker
- Ongoing Inquiry

Desired Outcomes

Teachers who...

- are capable of creating and sustaining a learning environment for urban students which enables those students to succeed
- continue to experiment and improve their practice throughout their professional careers
- routinely use problem-solving, critical thinking, teamwork and reflectivity in carrying out their professional responsibilities
- routinely adapt learning experiences to meet special learning needs of their students paying particular attention to students' prior knowledge and learning styles
- routinely integrate multicultural education into the learning environments they create
- function as teachers-as-decision-makers who make reasonable judgments, are able to articulate the rationale for those decisions, and are able to modify their actions based on additional data.